

## Information on Campylobacteriosis (Campylobacter Infection)



**What is Campylobacter?** Campylobacter is a bacteria which can cause an infection of the intestines.

**What are the symptoms?** Common symptoms are diarrhea (which may contain blood or pus), abdominal pain, fever, nausea, and vomiting.

### How is Campylobacter spread?

- Eating contaminated food, especially improperly cooked **poultry** (chicken or turkey), **meat** (beef, pork, lamb), or **uncooked food contaminated by cutting boards or knives**, which have been in contact with raw poultry or meat.
- Drinking un-pasteurized milk or water contaminated with the bacteria.
- Contact with infected pets (especially puppies or kittens) or other animals.
- Direct contact with feces from infected people.

**How long after being infected does a person become sick?** From 1-10 days, usually 3-5 days.

### When can someone with Campylobacter spread it to others?

As long as two to seven weeks after getting sick, if not treated with antibiotics.

People usually stop being contagious 2-3 days after beginning to take an appropriate antibiotic.

**Who is susceptible?** Everyone. All ages.

**How can the spread of Campylobacter be prevented?** Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water:

- *after* using the toilet or after changing dirty diapers,
- *after* contact with animals,
- *after* handling raw poultry and meat, and
- *before* preparing food, serving food, or eating.
- **Thoroughly cook all food, especially poultry.**
- Wash cutting boards and utensils with soap and hot water after contact with raw poultry and meat.
- Drink only *pasteurized* milk.

### When can a person with Campylobacter return to work or child care?

**WORK**--People with Campylobacter who provide care to children in child care settings, provide care to persons in health care facilities or residential care facilities, or work as a food handler **must not work while they have diarrhea.**

**CHILD CARE**--Children with Campylobacter who have diarrhea **should not attend child care until their symptoms stop.**

The Health Department may require that food service workers, health care workers, or child care providers submit a stool sample to assure they are no longer infectious before returning to work.

### What is the treatment?

Fluid replacement (keeping well hydrated).

Doctors may prescribe an appropriate antibiotic.

*If you have questions, please call your doctor or local health department.*

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